

ADVENT INTERNATIONAL TURNS TO CLOUD COMPUTING TO MEET CONTENT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE



When Advent International Corporation created a new public web site with extensive performance demands, they turned to Amazon Web Services (AWS) to achieve rapid deployment, flexible resource utilization and simplified redundancy. Using Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2), Advent International achieved reduced costs, improved performance and rapid deployment time.

Situation

Advent International, a leading global private equity firm with offices in 15 countries, had demanding requirements for their new web site: Frequently changing, searchable content in nine languages, and rich media. These requirements were best met by a sophisticated content management platform. Because Advent International makes extensive use of Microsoft's SharePoint, they chose SharePoint and its Content Management features as the platform for their new site.

During integration and performance testing, Advent International's well-regarded hosting provider struggled to keep up with demands for highly flexible configurations, rapid provisioning and deactivation of resources. Making changes to the environment for testing and sizing purposes required too many steps, and simply took too much time. In addition to being difficult to configure, the traditional service was expensive. Advent's long-time technical advisor, Greystone Solutions, had been performing a technical oversight role during integration and performance testing and suggested the Amazon EC2 as an alternative.

Solution

By using the EC2 platform, Greystone was able to fully provision a full-scale test environment in a few days—a task that had required several weeks using a physical environment. Real-world performance testing was easy because changing the computing resources available on an Amazon Machine Image (AMI) is as simple as clicking a button. This configuration also enables Advent International to pay only for the computing power, disk, and bandwidth they are using at any time. Since their site serves a global audience, the distributed world-wide nature of Amazon Web Services means that they can easily move content to multiple regions of the world, improving network latency and therefore user experience.

After successful load testing, the creation of an appropriate production environment was completed in a matter of days. The authoring environment where Advent's content managers could create and edit content was securely connected from Advent's offices to the Amazon EC2 infrastructure and the system was brought online.

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Solution Overview

Customer Profile

Advent International is a leading private equity firm with offices around the world specializing in buyout and venture capital funds.

Industry

Financial Services

Challenge

Provide reliable, scalable and flexible platform for Advent's content management system based corporate website.

Solution

Use Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud for Windows as an alternative to traditional application hosting.

Technologies Used

- Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2™)
- Microsoft® Office SharePoint Server 2007
- Microsoft® SQL Server 2005

Benefits

- Low maintenance costs
- Stand-alone backup without additional cost
- Ability to dynamically scale up servers
- Improved availability and maintenance
- Improved security
- Better content management capabilities





In order to assure that the solutions were production-worthy, Greystone engineered real-time monitoring, alerting and event logging as well as methods for patch management, application management and content publication that facilitate the 24/7 service level required for the site.

The majority of the infrastructure support activities that would otherwise be required to support a server such as this are handled by EC2. Consequently, Greystone is able to offer Advent better service and lower costs for their content management system than could be achieved with conventional methods.

Results



The old Advent International site has been replaced with the new MOSS portal on Amazon's Elastic Computing Cloud.

Advent can now easily change the content as well as the look and feel of the site by using SharePoint built-in functionality.

Users in different locations can test the changes and push them into production at any given time, in a seamless way to the rest of the world.

For More Information

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We look forward to hearing from you and hope you build your next project with Greystone!

Benefits

Lower Costs

Advent has significantly lowered their maintenance costs by switching to the EC2 platform. With Amazon Web Services responsible for all infrastructure support and Greystone handling software support, they have realized better service and lower costs for their content management system.

Flexibility

Advent now has the ability to dynamically scale up servers to respond to changes in demand. Both capacity and bandwidth can be instantly changed to meet demand. They can also take advantage of Amazon's built-in capabilities to target content based on location for better flow and increased speed.

Ease of Manageability

Advent International now has a stand-alone backup ready to replace the production environment without additional cost or configuration time. They have greatly improved security now that physical security issues have disappeared. They now have the capability to change content fast and content can now be pushed to production with the content deployment tool in a matter of minutes. They have also realized improved availability and maintenance through management of the deployment environments on Amazon EC2.

